



Monthly Reminders

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!

This is your February reminder from the Missouri Department of Higher Education.

Important Dates

February 10 - registration deadline for March 13 [SAT](#)

February 18 - late registration deadline for March 13 [SAT](#)

March 5 - registration deadline for April 10 [ACT](#)

Students • Students • Students • Students • Students

If you are a college student...

- The [2010-2011 Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) is now available online. It's recommended that you file your FAFSA - the first step in applying for student aid - as soon as possible.
 - Your college's deadline for filing the FAFSA is different than the federal deadline, so be sure to check with your school so you don't overlook any important deadlines and miss out on opportunities for additional dollars.
 - Your FAFSA must be filed by **April 1, 2010**, in order to be eligible for some state financial assistance programs such as [Access Missouri](#).
 - Filing your FAFSA early means you'll get information about your potential financial aid award amounts sooner.
- If you would like free professional help filling out your FAFSA, financial aid advisors will be available at [locations throughout the state](#) to help you during [FAFSA Frenzy](#), a program of [College Goal Sunday](#) (CGS), on the following dates:
 - **Sunday, February 21**
 - **Saturday, March 6**
 - **Sunday, March 21**

To find a [CGS location](#) or other financial aid workshop near you, check out the Missouri Association of Student Financial Aid Personnel's (MASFAP) [Wuz Up events calendar](#). If you decide to attend a FAFSA Frenzy event, be sure to bring the following:

1. Your [FAFSA PIN](#) number;
2. Your Social Security Number (SSN) and your parents' SSNs if you are under the age 24 and not married;
3. Your driver's license number if you have one;
4. Your Alien Registration Number if you are not a U.S. citizen;

5. 2009 federal tax information or tax returns (including IRS W-2 information) for yourself and spouse if you are married, and for your parents if you are providing parent information. If you have not yet filed a 2009 income tax return at the time you complete your FAFSA, you can still submit your FAFSA but you must provide estimated income and tax information;
 6. Records of untaxed income, such as child support received, workman's compensation, Federal Work-Study or other need-based work programs, student and scholarship aid reported, veterans benefits, for yourself, and your parents if you are providing parent information; and
 7. Information on savings, investments, and business and farm assets for yourself, and your parents if you are providing parent information.
- After completing the FAFSA, watch for an e-mail notice indicating your Student Aid Report (SAR) is ready.
 - Review your SAR for errors and make any necessary corrections.
 - Always investigate what scholarships your school or community may offer. Many provide scholarships aimed at specific areas of study or for involvement in particular activities.
 - Check with your school's financial aid office to make sure all scholarships and financial aid have been received and applied to your account.

If you are a high school senior...

- If you think you will be using state or federal financial assistance to help pay for your college education, the [2010-2011 Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) is now available to complete online. The FAFSA is used to calculate your EFC (Expected Family Contribution), which is very important in determining how much financial assistance you may be eligible to receive.

Most colleges and universities have a much earlier deadline for filing the FAFSA than the U.S. Department of Education. While the official federal deadline is **June 30, 2011**, for the 2010-2011 academic year, you should check with the financial aid office at the school you plan to attend to make sure you know the deadline that applies to you. Many Missouri postsecondary institutions have financial aid priority deadlines in February or March of 2010 for the 2010-2011 academic year.

In addition to meeting the timeframe for your school, your FAFSA must be completed and filed by **April, 1, 2010**, to be eligible for some state financial assistance such as the [Access Missouri program](#). Since a large number of scholarships and grants are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, it's in your best interest to get your FAFSA filed as soon as possible.

If you would like free professional help filling out your FAFSA, financial aid advisors will be available at [locations throughout the state](#) to help you during [FAFSA Frenzy](#), a program of [College Goal Sunday](#) (CGS), on the following dates:

- **Sunday, February 21**
- **Saturday, March 6**
- **Sunday, March 21**

Textbook vouchers will be offered as prize drawings at each location to first-time, freshman filers. To find a CGS location or other financial aid workshop near you, check out the Missouri Association of Student Financial Aid Personnel's (MASFAP) [Wuz Up events calendar](#).

Since this will be your first time completing the [FAFSA](#), we thought it would be helpful to let you know what information you will need to bring with you to participate in CGS activities.

- What to bring:
 - Your parents, if applicable. Plan to attend even if they cannot.
 - Your student and parent PINs. Apply for your PINs at www.pin.ed.gov.
 - 2009 W-2 forms.
 - 2009 tax returns – if they're ready.
 - Your driver's license if you have one.
 - Records of child support received.
 - Information on savings, investments, and business and farm assets for your parents
 - Current bank statements.
 - What to bring if you haven't done your taxes yet:
 - Last paycheck received in December 2009 by you and your parents showing year-to-date earnings.
 - 2008 tax forms.
 - What if you don't have any 2009 tax information yet?
 - Don't worry! Attend anyway to learn valuable information about obtaining financial aid and filling out the FAFSA.
- After completing the FAFSA, watch for an e-mail notice indicating your Student Air Report (SAR) is ready.
 - Review your SAR for errors and make any necessary corrections.
 - Ask your high school to send your academic transcripts to the schools you applied to.
 - Contact the schools you submitted applications to and rank your top choices.
 - Make plans to retake the [ACT](#) (or [SAT](#)) if you're looking to get a higher score to meet various scholarship or school requirements. As a reminder, the students in the class of 2010 will need to achieve one of the qualifying scores below on or before the June 2010 national test date in order to qualify for the [Bright Flight Scholarship](#). A qualifying score achieved as a sophomore or junior on a national test date will also be accepted.

ACT Score	OR	SAT Critical Reading Score	<i>and</i>	SAT Math Score
31 or above		800 or above		790 or above

Students with scores at this level are eligible for an annual award of **up to** \$3,000. The actual award amount is dependent on the amount of funds allocated for the program during the 2010 [legislative session](#).

ACT Score	OR	SAT Critical Reading Score	<i>and</i>	SAT Math Score
30		770-799		780-789

Students with scores at this level are eligible for an annual award of **up to** \$1,000. The actual award amount, and the availability of the award at this level, is also dependent on the amount of funds allocated for the program during the 2010 [legislative session](#).

- “Bright Flight” students who have not provided all necessary information to the MDHE by the published deadlines will be considered late applicants and their awards will be subject to funding availability. The 2010-2011 deadlines are as follows:
 - **July 31, 2010** – preferred deadline for students who earn the qualifying ACT or SAT score on or before the **April 2010 test date**.
 - **September 30, 2010** – for students who earn the qualifying ACT or SAT score on the **June 2010 test date** or who did not meet the preferred deadline.
- The MDHE receives score information from ACT and the College Board approximately four to six weeks after each national test date.
- If you have achieved a qualifying score and have met the program’s other eligibility requirements, you should receive an approval letter from the MDHE this spring.

If you are a high school junior...

- Register and take college entrance exams this spring. If you don’t feel like you’re ready just yet, remember both [ACT](#) and [SAT](#) offer prep classes that might be worth your while, allowing you to get ready for the test and putting your mind at ease.
- To help you land on the school choice that’s best for you, it’s helpful to know your options. There are a variety of schools offering a wide mixture of both degrees and programs. Learn more about the different [types of colleges and universities](#) available in Missouri and search our [Institution, Program, and Degree Search](#) to help match up your interests and goals with the schools best suited to meet them.

If you are a younger teen...

- Have you met with your school counselor to lay out a plan for graduation and ultimately moving on to college? Starting early is key, and this spring is a great time to sit down with your counselor to make sure you know the full scoop. If you’re not sure where to even begin, check out College Board’s [Twenty Questions to Ask Your School Counselor: They’re there to answer them!](#)

Parents • Parents • Parents • Parents • Parents

- The [FAFSA \(Free Application for Financial Student Aid\)](#) is now available online. The deadline for Missouri aid is April 1. Your child’s school may have a different (and possibly earlier) deadline, so make sure to verify the deadline at the institution he/she plans to attend.
- Sit down with your high school student and talk about taking the [ACT](#) and the [SAT](#). Provide assistance in researching and registering for test dates if necessary.
- If you are a parent with younger children, you may want to consider opening a 529 college savings plan. The Missouri plan is called the [MO\\$T program](#), and it provides significant federal and state tax benefits, including a [state income tax deduction](#) of up to \$8,000 per year (\$16,000 if married, filing jointly) for Missouri taxpayers.

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